

I recently met with a radio station general manager in a medium market who has served in that capacity for over 10 years. He informed me that the owners of the outlet were in poor health and had decided to sell the station. Although the station had been very profitable for years, due to the amount of money being offered for this commercial frequency by The Walt Disney Company, no one in the community was able to compete or deliver a sound business plan based on the debt service that would be associated with the inflated purchase price being offered by this large corporation. In this case, the losers are not only the dedicated local employees of the station, but, most importantly, the listening audience who has depended on the station for years of quality locally originated programming. This station will be changed to yet another satellite delivery tool, in this case Radio Disney. I have no issues with Disney or any of their related businesses. My continuing concern is that under the current ownership rules locally programmed radio stations continue to decrease in numbers. The losers, once again, are the residents of communities across the country. As a small business owner and young entrepreneur who dreams of one day owning and operating a local radio station, I would like to request that the proposed revisions to current "Broadcast Ownership" rules not be made by the Commissioners until the following items are accomplished: 1.) Greater awareness among the population of the relevant issues that any decision to change or "loosen" ownership rules would have, 2.) Further studies on the issue and its future effects, 3.) Presentation to the public of the results of any new research performed detailing the pros and cons of changing the ownership rules, 4.) Opinion polling of citizens on the issue after increased awareness of the issue has been achieved. Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion and concerns.